

202: Choosing (and Doing!) What Matters to You (with Tonya Dalton)



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Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 202. We're talking about choosing what matters. Stay tuned

Hi, I'm Jen Riday and this podcast is for women who want to slow down, find balance, and love more. You'll learn how to get off that hamster wheel and make time for yourself without the guilt. How to love yourself and get your sparkle back, and how to create a phenomenal life. Welcome to the *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast.

Hey my friends! Welcome back to *Vibrant Happy Women*. I am 45 years old now. I just celebrated my birthday week last week and I love it. I can honestly say that my life has never been better and that every single year that goes by, I get happier.

Some people would say that's bragging, but I like to hold up an example of what is possible, and I hope that you, too, can say that with every new year, life is getting happier. The funny thing is, we think that happiness means you're not going to struggle. I think what it really means is that we get happier and more joy-filled as recognize struggle as normal and learn not to let it bother us.

I think that's one of the beauties of the struggles I've gone through in the past two years with my teens and the struggles before that with miscarriage and marriage. You get tired of being in pain, and you decide, "Hey, I'm just going to think about this another way".

For example, when I had my miscarriage, I had six, in fact. I know that sounds crazy, but it's true. By the time I had the second one, I decided to change my thoughts about it and I created the belief that, "Hey, why not

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believe that this spirit is just waiting around for the perfect body, so it's not a loss as much as it is a waiting game?"

When is that perfect body going to form for the perfect spirit? Oh, cool. Now the baby's coming, it has the right body, we're good to go. Everything that was meant to be happened. It's so much easier that way. On our last episode, we talked about priorities, and today we're going to extend that by choosing what matters and scheduling for it.

You're going to learn about million-dollar minutes, how to say, "Heck, yes!" to everything you're saying yes to, deciding between good, better, and best, and many other awesome ideas. By the end of this episode, you'll know what are your non-negotiables, and what does it mean for you to be a mom or a good working mom. So many good concepts that are very important for all of us. I can't wait for you to listen, let's dive in!

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Jen: Hey everyone, I'm with Tonya Dalton today, and she's a productivity expert, writer, speaker, and founder of inkWELL Press Productivity Company which is centered around productivity tools and training. Her first book, *The Joy of Missing Out* was just released, and Tonya's messages about business management productivity and the pursuit of passion impacted thousands of women and men, and inspired her to launch her podcast, *Productivity Paradox*, which has passed more than a million downloads, congratulations, Tonya, and she's been featured in various publications.

In 2019, Tonya received the Enterprising Woman of the Year Award. You guys might remember, Tonya was on the podcast maybe a couple of years

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back on episode 92, and I am super excited to have her back. Welcome back, Tonya.

Tonya: Thanks so much for having me, we had so much fun last time. I'm excited for us to chat again.

Jen: I'm super excited, and before we hit record, I was looking at your picture and I said, "Oh, you've changed," so I know you're going to talk a little bit about that today, but you also wrote your book, *The Joy of Missing Out*, and that's such a paradox, talking about the joy of missing out because most of us have the fear of missing out! Tell us more about why you titled your book that way, and what that means, exactly.

Tonya: I think you're so right that so many people live with this fear of missing out, that opportunity knocks and we have to open that door again and again every time it comes knocking because once it goes, maybe it never comes back again. We live in this constant fear of missing out, that we're not doing enough or that we're not busy enough or we're not checking things off of our boxes and I think there is this whole misconception that we need to be doing more. I like to tell people, "It's really not about doing more".

Productivity is not about doing more, it's doing what is more important. It really is prioritizing in our day, and I think if you sit back and you think about that ideal day that you have in your head, maybe that you dream about when you're in the shower or when you're waiting for your coffee in the morning, there's a lot of amazing things in that ideal day, but there's also a lot of things that are truly missing, things like being busy all day long, or that feeling of saying yes out of obligation or guilt instead of saying yes to the things we really want to say yes to. That feeling of being stretched too thin and running ourselves in 1000 different directions, those things are

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missing, and I truly believe there is so much joy in our days already, there's so much happiness that's just nestled right there.

But because of that business, because of that clutter and noise of our everyday lives, we don't see it. We need to actively choose to miss out, let's choose how we want to spend our days and that really is the joy of missing out, choosing to actively miss out on different opportunities so we can focus in on what matters most.

Jen: That's great. Fear of missing out, you could get really clear and say, "Actually, fear of missing out on a quiet moment," or, "I fear missing out on this nap right now". That's much better! "I fear that I'm going to be tired for the rest of my life! Oh no!". That's great. How do you choose your priorities and have the courage to say no to the other things that aren't so much of a priority?

Tonya: That's a good question, because I think it's easy when it's black or white, it's when there's the good, better, and best options. That's when it becomes difficult, when you think, "Ooh, I don't know. If I say no to this, am I turning down a big opportunity? Am I not really making the right choices?". I think honestly, what it comes down to, is really understanding who you are.

The first section of the book really is about discovery, and your priorities are the center point and everything works around you and your priorities. So often in the craziness and the hecticness of our everyday lives, we kind of lose sight of what truly are our priorities. We're so busy trying to treat everything as equally important, you forget that then nothing is a priority. We really want to make sure that when we're choosing to say yes to things, they really are steeped in what is important to us. In that first section of the

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book, we talk about the North Star, which is your mission, your vision, your core values.

Essentially, why you do what you do, where you want to go with your life, and how you want to get there. When we take a little bit of time to clarify what that looks like for you, and everybody is unique, everybody is different, their North Star is different for each and every one of us, what that North Star looks like, when we figure that out, then we can use that as our filter when opportunities arise or when things come up that we have a choice in.

We can choose to say yes if they fit that North Star, and if they don't, then we need to realize that every time that we're saying yes to things that don't really fit that ideal life that we have for ourselves, that vision that we have, every time we're saying yes to those, we're saying no to something else. We say yes to someone else's project or a volunteer opportunity that's not something we're really passionate about.

We're saying no to our own goals, we're saying no to time with our own family, we're saying no to the things that are truly important to us. When you start to reframe that and you realize that inside every yes is a no, and you discover, "Oh, is this 'no' really what I want to say no to?". It makes it so much easier when we have that kind of gray area instead of it being black and white.

I think, honestly, that is one of the ways that we can really have a litmus test of, "What is it I truly want to do?". In the book, we have a 'finding your yes blueprint'. I think it's not as simple as just saying no more often. I think we hear that message all the time: "You just need to say no more". Well, what do I want to say no to, and what do I want to say yes to? Saying yes

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to your yeses, to the things that will really be fulfilling to you, that makes a huge difference.

That's when it feels really good, when that yes crosses our lips and we go, "Alright, this is a great opportunity". I've created a whole blueprint for people to walk through to figure out, "Is this truly something I want to say yes to". I think so often, we think about whether we have the time, and it's not whether you have the time, it's whether this is your 'yes', whether this is the opportunity that is right for you. We need to ask some other questions before we dive into whether we have the time or not. Does this fit your North Star? Does this tie into a priority for you? Is this something that will be fulfilling to you? Is that soul filling, or just calendar filling? I think these questions we need to ask ourselves before we worry about, "Do I have the time?"

Jen: That's really good. I heard someone say that you only say yes if it's a "Heck, yes!". I thought, "Oh, that's really good". Your blueprint walks people through figuring that out.

Tonya: It does, yes. I think it's one of the challenges, is that we are inundated throughout our day with opportunities being presented to us. Whether we look at them as opportunities or not, people stop us all the time, "Can you do this?" "Can you do that?" "Can I just have you join in on this project?" "Can you join this committee?" and so often, we just say yes because it just comes out of our mouths without really thinking it through or we feel guilty or people catch us off guard. I think if we really start to think through what we truly want to say yes to, it becomes easier to say no to the things that don't fulfil that.

Jen: I was recently speaking to someone who said she likes to say yes to the things that bring joy. Oftentimes, many of us spend most of us time

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doing things that bring us pleasure and she was kind of differentiating between the two, and I've been thinking about it ever since. What brings me joy which is way deeper than pleasure in? What are your thoughts on that topic?

Tonya: No, I absolutely agree. Joy is this deeper feeling. It's really, truly, tied to the things that are meaningful to you. I think so often, we run around and we check 1000 things off our list, we run around busy all day long and we slip into that and we think to ourselves, "Oh, I didn't get enough done," even though we were busy all day long. It's because we're doing 1000 small, menial tasks that aren't really tied to that joy, that aren't really tied to those deep, meaningful things for ourselves.

Whereas, if we spent less time on those things and we spent more time on the things that matter most to us, maybe we do three tasks that have meaning instead of thirty tasks that are just ticking the boxes or just crossing things off your to-do list, we would end our days feeling so much more successful, so much more satisfied, and that's where I think that deep feeling of joy comes in, is when we are doing things that are tied to our North Star, things that feel good and meaningful in our lives that drive us closer to the ideal life we're all dreaming of.

Jen: Before we started talking, I mentioned before that, I said, "Wow, you look different than you did before". Tell us more about how you've been using this good, better, best, finding your 'yes process' to change your health.

Tonya: I understand that. I think we touch on this whole idea in the first section of the book, in discovery, that we have these stories that we tell ourselves. A good mom always puts her kids first; a good working mom goes to work and then comes home and takes care of work and take care

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of kids, and doesn't make time for herself; a good boss stays later than everybody else on their team.

We have these stories that we tell ourselves that create these limiting beliefs that really hold us back. One of the stories I was telling myself was, "I don't have time to exercise. I don't have time to take care of myself because I'm a really hands-on mom but I've got a job, I've got a career, and so I go to my work and then I come home and then I go to work and then I come home," and I wasn't really carving out the time and the space for myself.

I had to realize, "You know what? I need to prioritize me," because when we take care of ourselves, we're better able to take care of everyone else around us. When we feel good, when we feel healthy, we can really shine our light even brighter on everyone else when our batteries are recharged. I had to really stop and reframe this story that I was telling myself about what a good mom does, and I realized that a good mom takes care of herself so that she can take care of others.

I started really eating, really mindfully eating, and not just eating healthier but really actually enjoying the process of eating, not trying to do five things while I'm eating my lunch, really just enjoying the way the food tastes and I was finding that because I was doing that, I was eating less. I was really just savoring, and I think 'savoring' is one of the words that I really love that we don't do enough of. We don't savor enough.

Taking the time to really savor what I was eating, eating a little bit slower, maybe having conversations while I'm eating, that made a huge difference. Really creating a space for myself where exercise was a priority. I go ahead now, and I prioritize exercise, and it is marked on my calendar as a

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meeting that is non-negotiable, and I go ahead and I sign up for my classes months in advance so it's already on my calendar.

It's not something I even question, it just becomes this habit that I go and I exercise on these certain days of the week, and to me, I started to feel so much better in all the different areas of my life when I started doing that. I lost weight, but it's more than just losing weight, it's feeling strong. I feel stronger and more confident, and I think it all really ties in with a lot of what we talk about here in the book with letting go of those stories. Instead of saying, "I don't have the time," realizing you do have the time, you just need to prioritize it.

Prioritizing your health takes some effort and you have to actively carve out that space. We touched on this, you and I, before we jumped on the recording, with writing this book. If I had just said, "Well, I'll write this book when I have time," it would have taken me thirty million years to write the book, because none of us have the time. If you actively choose, "Okay, I'm going to carve out this time, this many days a week, we get closer to our goal". That's how I wrote a book while running a podcast, running a business, having a house full of kids and everything else, because I actively prioritized it.

I think that's true whether we're talking about a goal or a passion project or our health, whatever it is you want to do, when we choose to prioritize it, we can create that time and that space for ourselves. That's when we get closer to where we want to go. That's how I feel now, I'm so much closer to my health goals, and I feel better. I feel better in all aspects. I was telling you, I feel better spiritually, emotionally, physically, in all ways, because I had given myself that gift of time to be able to take care of myself.

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Jen: Choosing joy. I love that. Tell us more... I have two questions about the exercise. You said classes, which exercise classes do you like?

Tonya: I really like Pilates. One of my other issues is I have 1000 things wrong with my back. Me and my doctors are like, "I don't know what's happened to your back," but there's all kinds of issues going on there. That's one of the things I used to tell myself, "Well, there's no way for me to exercise because the doctors tell me it's not a matter of if you'll have major back surgery, it's when". I like to say, "Well, no. I think we're going to shift that on its head and I'm going to avoid major back surgery".

Really, it was a matter of me trying to figure out, too, what would work for me. I go to Pilates classes. My back is incredibly strong. Literally, I used to live with pain on a daily basis, enough where the doctors were like, "We want to give you painkillers," and I was like, "No, I don't want to do painkillers every day". Now, I live almost pain-free because of the exercise. Talk about finding joy! Living pain-free is definitely a path to a more joyful life. Yeah, I go to Pilates classes several times a week and really focus in on taking care of my back.

Jen: That's awesome, by the way. I love that. My second question is, a lot of people recommend doing your exercise first thing when your willpower is highest. What have you found works for you as far as scheduling?

Tonya: For me, it's not the very, very first thing of the day because I have a morning routine that I really like. My routine does involve doing some stretches and some things like that. I feel like we're told that there's a certain way we're supposed to do things. You're supposed to exercise first thing in the morning and then you go, "You know, that doesn't really work for me, so there's something wrong with me". That's not true. This is this whole idea...

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We talk about this again, in the book, this is why productivity and this is why systems fail people, is because we think there's this system and we have to revolve our lives around it, and I think it should be you in your priorities front and center. Let's create the systems to wrap them around you and your life. Let's play to your strengths, let's play to your weaknesses. If you are not a person who enjoys getting up early to exercise, then don't.

You know what, let's find a time that really does work for you. Maybe going for a walk after you eat lunch at your office. Maybe that's what works for you. Maybe it's after the kids go to bed. I think so often, we're told that this is the best time to do x, y, or z, and we think, "Well, I have to do it during these times". Let's do away from that. Let's really embrace some flexibility. Let's love our perfectly imperfect selves and know that maybe this works for a lot of other people, but it doesn't work for me. Find the time that works really well for you.

Now, for me, what works really well is I work out generally around 8.30 in the morning. I do my own personal morning routine and then we do the routine with the kids, drive carpool, drop them off, I go into work, I set my day, I set my agenda for the day, and then I go to my exercise class at 8.30. I exercise, and then I have that done. Just do what truly works for you.

Jen: What does your morning routine look like, and how much sleep do you like to get, for example? I just love hearing how people schedule their days. I love the idea of 8.30 in the morning. I could pull that one off, that's good!

Tonya: See, this is the thing! You want it to be achievable, you want it to be accomplishable. I think so often, we set ourselves up for these unachievable days. You saying, "Yeah, that sounds good. I could do that".

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That's the start, that's when we build up that momentum that makes it possible to make that first step and then the second step and then the third step, and then create this lifestyle for ourselves where we are exercising regularly.

I have a longer morning routine for the days that I want to get up early and get some solid work done and I have a shorter routine. That's that flexibility that I kind of touched on a little bit ago. For me, getting up at 4.30 in the morning is a really great time for me to get work done, but I can't do 4.30 in the morning five days a week necessarily. Some weeks I can, some weeks I can't. I shoot for doing that three days out of the five in a regular week.

On those days, I wake up and I lay in bed for about ten minutes and that's my time that I pray, and I meditate and I do some visualization. I get up and I drink two cups of water, 16oz, that gets me 25% of the way of my daily water goal, and I have found that when I hydrate in the morning, it helps me feel less cranky, it makes me feel a little more awake, and that really helps. Then, I do my teeth brushing, I do some stretches and then I go and I sit on my couch and that's where I do my work.

Let's see, at that point, it's probably a little over an hour before I get the kids up, I get the kids up around 6.05 in the morning, to be precise. I go and I start waking them up. After I get my kids up, I go back downstairs, and I slip back into bed with my husband for ten minutes and I call that my million-dollar minutes because that is my ten minutes that I really focus with intention on my marriage. He and I sit and we lay in the bed, we maybe snuggle or we just talk and we laugh, just kind of hang out as husband and wife.

It's very intentional, it's very focused on me and my role as being a wife, and I call it my million-dollar minutes because, honestly, if that time were

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gone tomorrow, I would pay a million dollars to get it back. I really believe that we have these million-dollar minutes throughout our day, this time that's really meaningful that we, in the craziness and hecticness of our lives, we just let it slip through our fingers. I really try to create that space with intention.

I really focus on my marriage for ten minutes, and then after the ten minutes, I get up and then I'm off and running, up and yelling up the stairs to the kids, "Please get up! Who's taking a shower?", into that regular kind of chaotic routine with the children, but my morning feels so solid because I take care of myself spiritually, I take care of myself emotionally, I take care of myself physically, and truly, I start my day already feeling like I've won the day because I feel so solid.

Jen: You drop the kids off and drive to work. Is your work close to your house?

Tonya: It's not. It's not far, but it's not close either.

Jen: It's not your back yard!

Tonya: Yes, that would be really nice!

Jen: Yeah.

Tonya: I live near the farms. I can literally have entire meals that have all been grown and raised within a mile of my house. There's not a lot of places for office space. I figured out a path so it's on the carpool drop-off routes between the two different schools.

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Jen: That's so great. I love that. Let's shift gears. You talked about discovery, finding your North Star and figuring out your best 'yes'. What are the other three steps you talk about in the book?

Tonya: The first step, as I mentioned, is discovery. I think it is really because, as we talked about, it really is about, "Let's create the systems around you". That discovery is the important part that we start with because I want you to figure out, "Who am I? What are the important things to me? What are my priorities, my passions, my purpose?". We start there and then we build off of that and we talk about clarity.

Okay, how do we clarify our days and really allow ourselves to focus in on what matters most? How do we prioritize? How do we create a day that feels like we are spending the majority of our time on the things that are the most important to us? That's the second step in the process. The third step is simplicity.

That sure sounds nice, to have a day that's focused on our priorities, but you've still got to pay the bills, you've still got to do laundry, you've still got to put dinner on the table and all those not-so-glamorous tasks. How do we create systems? How do we create a life where those things happen a little more seamlessly, a little more automatically? How do we use habits and routines?

That's when I talk about things like my morning routine and how you create routines. How do you create habits that are really healthy, so those things can run on autopilot, we're not spending our brain space thinking, "Gosh, have I done laundry?". Let's instead choose to spend our brain space on the things that are truly important. How do I get to this goal? How do I push this project even better? How do I innovate this? All those things that are much more important.

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Simplicity is a really important part of the process because it really is allowing life to run smoothly. So we have discovery, then clarity, followed by simplicity, and then that fourth step is harmony. I like to tell people, “We’ve got to do away with the idea of balance. There is no balance, and if we are perfectly balanced in our lives, we’re not really moving in any direction”. If you think of it like riding a bike, if you want to go straight, yeah, you’re perfectly balanced, but if you want to turn in any direction, if you want to choose the path you’re going to go on, if you want to go left, you’ve got to lean to the left.

You have to go out of perfect balance and then you can’t stay leaned over, you’ll fall over, you’ll skin your knee, so you have to counter-balance and put yourself upright. If you want to go to the right, you’ve got to lean to the right for a little bit. That’s the way life really works, this leaning into a priority and then counter-balancing, maybe leaning into work for a little bit and working on a work goal, and then counter-balancing, and then leaning into our personal space and then counter-balancing.

It’s this ebb and flow in the flexibility that we really need to allow life to happen. We do have these rigid ideas of what we are supposed to do and we need to do away with that. Instead of feeling that this is what I have to do, let’s choose that this is what I what I get to do, and then let’s use harmony to feel good about that.

Jen: I really like that idea, the counter-balancing, that’s a unique idea, but it makes sense. When you’re walking, you go uphill and you go downhill and you go round things. Life is like that. Where did we get this idea that it should be steady and every day the same? It doesn’t make sense.

Tonya: Have you seen those graphics of how we think it’s supposed to be and this straight line, and what it really looks like and it’s like-

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Jen: Yeah, loop-de-loops.

Tonya: Crazy wiggles and lines and loops and everything else. That's really how life works. When we're so rigid, it does not allow for the ebb and the flow of life, of seasons that change. I think that's really important, that flexibility we need to give ourselves. I think we need to give ourselves a lot more grace.

We're holding ourselves up to this incredibly high standard, even though it's a standard we are setting for ourselves, but it's so incredibly high and rigid that it's unachievable. This is why we don't feel that joy, we feel frustrated, we feel annoyed at ourselves sometimes, we go to bed and we're like, "Oh, didn't get enough done," or, "You didn't work hard enough," we'll say to ourselves, right? Even though we've been working hard all day.

Jen: Yes. You just might not have done the important things, like you said.

Tonya: That's exactly right. Three really important tasks are going to get you much closer to where you want to go than tasks dragging you in all different directions.

Jen: Yes, that's true.

Tonya: You get caught up in the idea of quantity, and it really is more about quality.

Jen: Where can people get your book if they're interested? Is it on Amazon?

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Tonya: It is, it's on Amazon, it's at Barnes and Noble, it's at Target. If you go to joy.missingout.com, there's links to all different places the book is available. Anywhere books are sold, you can find it.

Jen: It sounds amazing. I am so excited that you wrote this book and you're kind of shifting the conversation. Counter-balancing is a great concept, plus so many of the other ones. Let's shift and talk about just intuition, it's a topic I've been interested in. Share a time when you feel like you were guided to do something based on intuition, God, the universe, whatever you like to call it.

Tonya: I think this is the thing. We are all guided by this intuition, by God, by the universe, or whatever it is you want to call it, but I think that because of the craziness and the hecticness of our lives, we don't hear it. We don't pause and listen. I think when we really do that, we really can find that path that we're meant for, that we're designed for, that truly is designed for us. For me, I actually talk about this in the book, I had a shift in my life where I had started a business, I grew that business to the point where my husband could come work with me, and it was great that we were able to work together, but it wasn't fulfilling for me.

Jen: Oh no! That's fun!

Tonya: That was a hard thing. I had to go to my husband and say, "Listen, I love working with you, but I don't love what I'm creating. I don't love what I'm putting forth into the world," and he says, "You know, okay. What do you want to do?". I'm like, "I have no idea! I don't know. What does this look like for me?". This is why we start the book with discovery, because I've been through this myself.

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It's not that I've known since birth that this is what I'm meant to do, I had to give myself that space and that clarity, and I literally sat on the edge of my bed and prayed to God and I said... I didn't say, "Give me the answers," I was like, "Please, help me to find the path. Help me to find the path and just quiet myself and just listen". I think that when we really make that space to do that, we truly can hear it, and that we truly can shift and change and push ourselves in the direction we want to go.

I gave myself that space, I gave myself that grace and that time, which again, there's that whole idea of, "I don't have time for that". Yeah, you need to prioritize it. You can create that time for yourself to really listen and figure out what is the universe telling you, what is God telling you? For me, it really was a matter of, "Okay, this is the direction I'm being pulled towards when I really look at my life. When I look at the things, my breadcrumbs and the path, I close up my other business and I opened up inkWELL Press, and I have to be honest with you, making that decision was hard, it wasn't easy.

It's not ever easy to close a business, especially a business that pays my bills. My husband and my children, all those important things have to happen, it took care of. I had to close it and open up inkWELL Press and I haven't looked back since because I am so much happier, I feel so much more aligned with what I'm really supposed to be doing. I think, really, giving yourself that gift of listening to your intuition really can make a huge difference in our lives but we don't feel like we have the time to do it.

Jen: I can hear the joy in your voice as you've found that alignment. It's really fun. You can tell when someone's in alignment because that energy feels more like a laser than a big ray of light, you know? It's strong, so I feel that from you. That's amazing.

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Tonya: Thank you. I truly am passionate about what I do, I'm passionate about this book, and I think that's one of the things that makes it so easy to talk about, because I love seeing these light bulb moments in these women's eyes when they start implementing some of these things. They're emailing me saying, "Oh my gosh, it works! I thought it would be so much more difficult but it's working!". When you find that alignment, it really does make a huge difference in how you feel about your everyday life.

Jen: It's so true. Everyone, Tonya's book has really cool exercises, different than most other time-management books I've ever looked through. Definitely check out *The Joy of Missing Out*, it's a great one. Tonya, before we say goodbye, I want to have you leave our listeners with a challenge.

Tonya: Okay. I love this question because I love to challenge people. Here's what I would challenge you with. If you are thinking that you're ready for a change, or you're thinking about a goal or a dream or something you want to do, what is one thing that you can do today to make that difference? What's one tiny, itty-bitty, little tiny step that you can do to get that momentum going?

I'll tell you that for me, with this journey we talked about earlier about getting to exercise, it was about figuring out, "Okay, I'm going to give myself ten minutes every day to research what's good for my back, what exercises can I do, or what kind of classes would be good for my back". I gave myself a week to do a little bit of research, just some light research. That little, tiny step got the momentum going, then I started thinking about Pilates, and then it was like, "Okay, next step is finding a place. Then, the next step is signing up for a class". We think that life is full of these giant leaps, these big steps, when really, it's just a series of small steps one after the other. What's the one small step that you can take today?

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Jen: For me? Signing up for yoga class. Yeah.

Tonya: Oh, good. I love that.

Jen: That's cool. I have a quick question with this. So you take that first step, how are you sure you're going to keep taking the steps a month later or two months later when most people start to fizzle out? What's your trick there?

Tonya: I really think, and we touch on this when we think about habits in the book, the whole idea of tracking or really monitoring how you're doing, using a habit tracker or just crossing off days in your calendar, you start to get that little bit of a dopamine hit, "Oh, I did this yesterday so I'm going to do it tomorrow," and you look and you start to create this chain of events where you're like, "Okay, I'm doing things each and every day," and you can physically see it on a habit tracker or on a calendar or somewhere else.

I think it does build up that feeling of, "I'm winning, and I don't want to break the streak". There's something about creating a streak for ourselves, creating a chain of events that are connected. We don't like to break the chain. A habit takes an average of 66 days, on average. If you make yourself a little tracker for three months, that will establish that as a habit. Once that habit is established, all that thinking that you had to do to get it started, that goes away and that really starts to simplify and then it just becomes autopilot. We just know, "I know I go to Pilates on Mondays, and I know I go to Pilates on Thursday," or whatever it is. It just happens automatically.

Jen: That is so great. This is the perfect, perfect thing. This is the best, best advice. So everyone, figure out your one thing you're going to do today and then create your 66-day chart, and let's do this! This is great. Also be sure

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to get your hands on *The Joy of Missing Out*, Tonya's book, it's awesome. Tonya, I want to thank you for being here. This really motivated me, and I think it did everyone else who's listening as well.

Tonya: I love that. I hope it did. I love that this is coming out with New Years' because it's always a 'new year, new you,' and I think it's ultimately up to you what your 2020 looks like. Take that small step and get it going, make 2020 your year. I love it.

Jen: Thank you. We'll leave it right there. Thanks so much Tonya.

Tonya: Thank you.

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There were tons of nuggets of wisdom in that interview, and I hope you're going to take some of those ideas and apply them. For those of you in the Vibrant Happy Women Club, we make it easy because this week, I am teaching a class called *How I Plan My Time*. It's very simple, how I, Jen Riday, plan my time. Apparently, some of you have this idea that managing time is my superpower.

That might be true, I don't know. It comes pretty easily to me and I know there are people out there that do it way better than me, but I have figured out a system to plan my time and manage six kids and a business and to be relatively healthy and happy, and I'm going to be sharing how I do that, and that is for those of you who are in the Club.

If you are not yet in the Club, you're going to want to join us, you can do that at jenriday.com/join. Alright, I'll be back again next week talking about discomfort. This is about the time of year when we start to give up on our

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New Years' resolutions and a lot of that happens because we feel uncomfortable with the change. Our brain cries out for familiar patterns, and it feels uncomfortable.

How do we manage that discomfort so that we can keep moving forward toward our desired results? I'll be talking about that next week. I appreciate you so much for listening. I wish you a very happy weekend and week, depending on when you're listening to this, and until next time, make it a great week. Take care.

If you enjoy this podcast, you have to check out the Vibrant Happy Women Club. It's my monthly group coaching program where we take all this material to the next level and to get you the results that will blow your mind. Join me in the Vibrant Happy Women Club at jenriday.com/join.